

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (original) A vacuum pump comprising a continuous ignition source for igniting fuel within a pumped fluid to regulate the concentration of the fuel in fluid exhaust from the pump.
2. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~G~~claim 1, wherein the continuous ignition source is an electric discharge device.
3. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~G~~claim 1 ~~or Claim 2~~, wherein the continuous ignition source is a spark plug.
4. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~G~~claim 1, wherein the continuous ignition source is a heated filament.
5. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~G~~claim 1, wherein the continuous ignition source is a plasma.
6. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~any preceding claim 1 comprising in the form of a multi-stage vacuum pump, and~~ the continuous ignition source ~~being~~is located between adjacent stages of the pump.
7. (original) A multi-stage vacuum pump comprising, between adjacent stages of the pump, a continuous ignition source for igniting a fuel within a pumped fluid.

8. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~Claim 6 or Claim 7~~, wherein the continuous ignition source is located within a combustion chamber,
~~located between stages of the pump.~~
9. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~any of Claims 6 to 8, claim 7~~ comprising a plurality of continuous ignition sources each located between respective adjacent stages of the pump.
10. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~any preceding claim 1~~, wherein the pressure of pumped fluid at the ignition source ~~or each respective source~~ is in the range from 50 to 950 mbar.
11. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~any preceding claim 1~~, comprising means for injecting into the pump a fluid stream comprising an oxidant for assisting in igniting the fuel.
12. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~Claim 11~~, wherein the oxidant is one of oxygen and CDA.
13. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~Claim 11 or Claim 12~~, wherein the injected fluid stream also comprises a fuel for increasing the likelihood of ignition occurring within the pump.
14. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~any of Claims 11 to 13~~, wherein the injection means is arranged to inject the fluid stream between adjacent stages of the pump.
15. (currently amended) ~~A~~The pump according to ~~any of Claims 27-41 to 14~~ ~~when dependent from Claim 8~~, wherein the fluid stream is injected into the combustion chamber.
16. (original) A method of treating a fluid containing a fuel, the method comprising conveying the fluid to a vacuum pump and, within the pump,

igniting the fuel to regulate the concentration of the fuel in fluid exhaust from the pump.

17. (new) The pump according to claim 6 wherein the continuous ignition source is located within a combustion chamber.
18. (new) The pump according to claim 6 comprising a plurality of continuous ignition sources each located between respective adjacent stages of the pump.
19. (new) The pump according to claim 8 comprising a plurality of continuous ignition sources each located between respective adjacent stages of the pump.
20. (new) The pump according to claim 7 wherein the pressure of pumped fluid at the ignition sources is in the range from 50 to 950 mbar.
21. (new) The pump according to claim 9 wherein the pressure of pumped fluid at the ignition sources is in the range from 50 to 950 mbar.
22. (new) The pump according to claim 7 comprising means for injecting into the pump a fluid stream comprising an oxidant for assisting in igniting the fuel.
23. (new) The pump according to claim 10 comprising means for injecting into the pump a fluid stream comprising an oxidant for assisting in igniting the fuel.
24. (new) The pump according to claim 12 wherein the injected fluid stream also comprises a fuel for increasing the likelihood of ignition occurring within the pump.
25. (new) The pump according to claim 12 wherein the means for injecting is arranged to inject the fluid stream between adjacent stages of the pump.

26. (new) The pump according to claim 13 wherein the means for injecting is arranged to inject the fluid stream between adjacent stages of the pump.
27. (new) The pump according to claim 8 comprising means for injecting into the pump a fluid stream comprising an oxidant for assisting in igniting the fuel.
28. (new) The pump according to claim 27 wherein the oxidant is one of oxygen and CDA.
29. (new) The pump according to claim 27 wherein the fluid stream is injected into the combustion chamber.
30. (new) The pump according to claim 28 wherein the fluid stream is injected into the combustion chamber.
31. (new) The pump according to claim 28 wherein the injected fluid stream also comprises a fuel for increasing the likelihood of ignition occurring within the pump.
32. (new) The pump according to claim 31 wherein the means for injecting is arranged to inject the fluid stream between adjacent stages of the pump.
33. (new) The pump according to claim 32 wherein the means for injecting is arranged to inject the fluid stream between adjacent stages of the pump.